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ABSTRACT

Improving the act of teaching in a classroom implies the need to study nonverbal cues and events, for many classroom phenomena serve as communicators of information and tend to either facilitate or inhibit learning. Nonverbal language, a reflection of both cultural and individual differences, includes not only the teacher's facial expressions, postures, gestures, etc., but also the way in which he manages the learning environment--desk arrangement, movement and position in the classroom, allocation of time, and tactics for controlling student behavior. Various classroom observation techniques have been developed to analyze teacher behaviors on a continuum ranging from encouraging to inhibiting communication and to enable teachers to understand and improve their nonverbal behavior and influence. The most important sources of improvement lie, however, in the teacher's continuing openness to, and awareness of, the occurrence and significance of nonverbal events and expressions, i.e., in his "ability and willingness to understand how he has been understood." (Included with this monograph are a variety of outlines and anecdotal illustrations and a 17-item bibliography.) (JES)

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Teaching is Communicating

nonverbal language in the classroom

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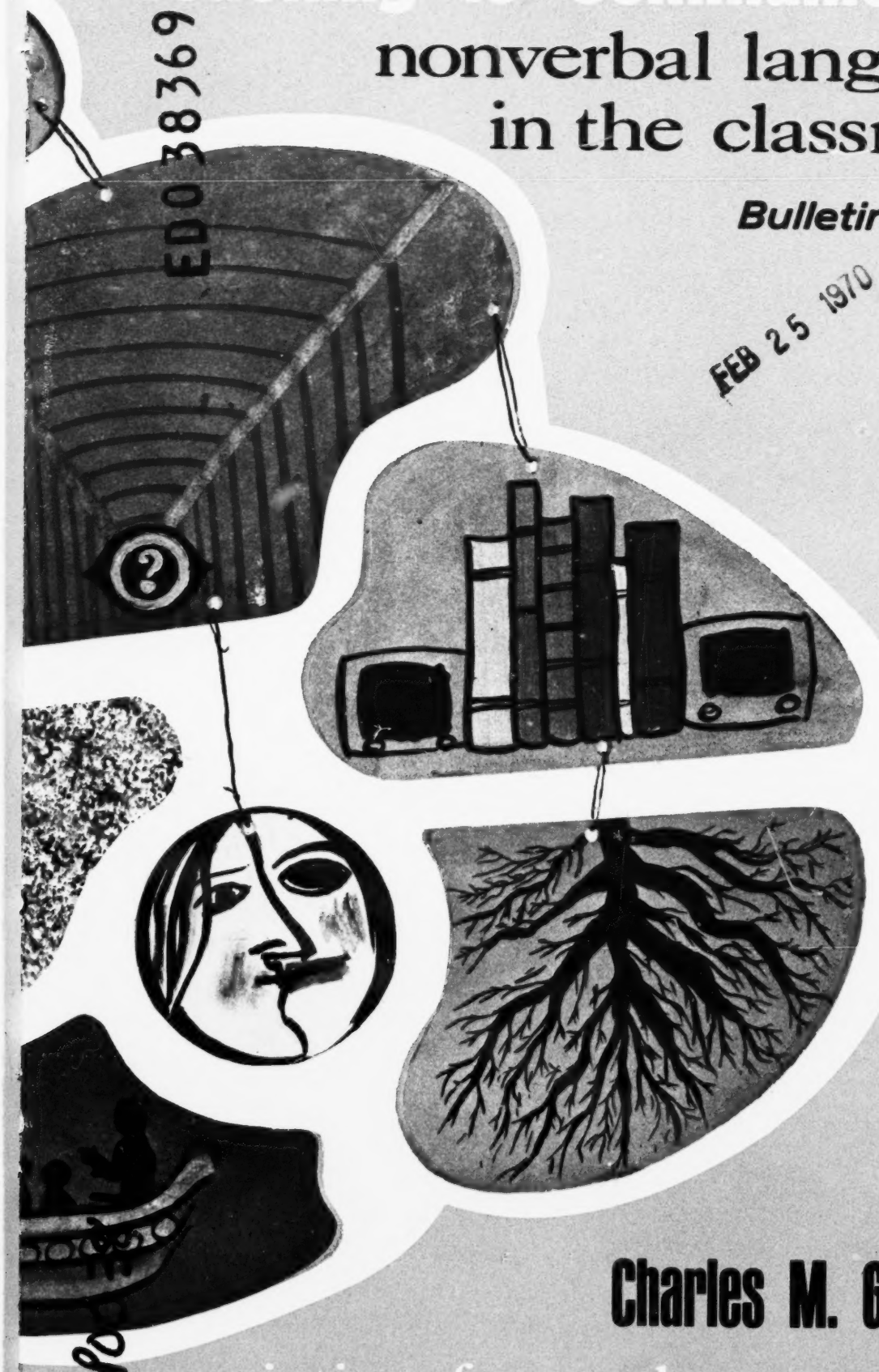

Charles M. Galloway

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TEACHING IS COMMUNICATING:

NONVERBAL LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM

Bulletin No. 29

Charles M. Galloway

Associate Professor of Education

The Ohio State University

Association for Student Teaching

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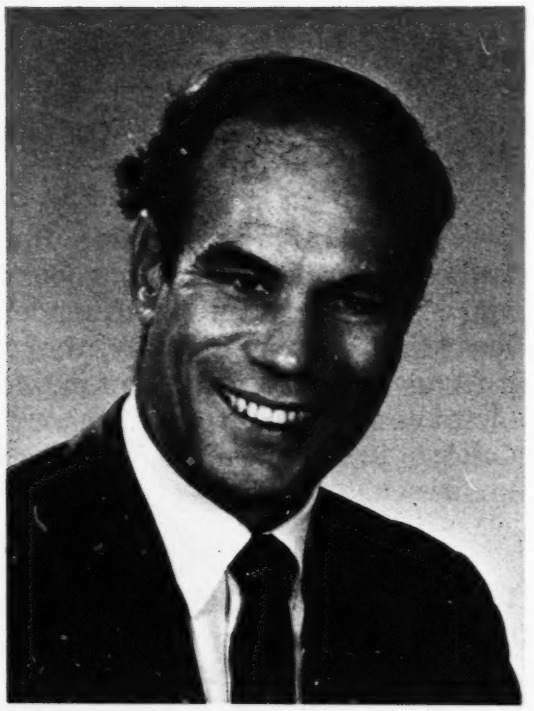
FOREWORD

It is with a great deal of pride that the Publications Committee presents, as the first of a new series of occasional papers, a monograph by Charles Galloway of The Ohio State University. Dr. Galloway has not only contributed to the Association a manuscript containing his basic material on nonverbal communication but has written a special section on means of assessing and improving nonverbal language. Teachers, students, and supervisors will find immensely helpful ideas on every page. And yes-yesers, eyebrow-lifters, and toe-tappers may gain some insight into the inhibiting or encouraging qualities of the things they say without words.

Publications Committee
1970

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr. Charles M. Galloway, Associate professor in the College of Education, became a member of The Ohio State University faculty in 1967.

He came to Ohio State from North Texas University, where he held the rank of associate professor 1965-66 and assistant professor 1963-65. In 1962-63, he was curriculum coordinator for the Montgomery County (Md.) Public Schools.

A native of Kentucky, Dr. Galloway received the bachelor of arts degree in 1957 and the master of arts in 1959 from the University of Kentucky. He was awarded the doctor of education degree by the University of Florida in 1962, holding a graduate fellowship 1961-62. As an undergraduate, he was active in student government, dramatics, Kappa Delta Pi, and Phi Delta Kappa.

At Ohio State, Dr. Galloway's fields are teaching courses in curriculum and instruction for undergraduate and graduate elementary majors and research on teaching styles and nonverbal communication.

He is the author of several published articles in these fields and a member of the American Education Research Association. He was associated with the research commission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum 1963-66. He is listed in Who's Who in American Education.

Dr. Galloway is married and has three children.

INTRODUCTION

The publication of this Bulletin represents a landmark for the author. His has been a long journey. He began a little over ten years ago to research the influences of nonverbal cues on teaching and learning. Along the way, there were many who believed in the significance of nonverbal communication. They shared their perceptive observations and their encouragement to continue the research. Others scoffed at its purported relevance and pronounced it unresearchable.

Kimball Wiles was one of the many who extended their support. In his speeches he often referred to the importance of nonverbal communication for understanding the meaning of human conduct. Early inquiries regarding this work were a direct result of his spreading the word (nonverbal, of course). There were other kinds of assistance by Maurice Ahrens, Ira Gordon, Douglas Scates, Charles Robbins, Jerry Mars, Herb LaGrone, to name a few. The workshops on teacher behavior, sponsored by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, were of enormous benefit in getting the ideas of nonverbal behavior before an audience of teacher educators.

At The Ohio State University, it has been graduate students who have sustained the study of nonverbal communication. Their enthusiasm and excitement about the research possibilities have been gratifying. Their endless questions about the difficulties have been an immense challenge. Graduate students who have long since received their Ph.D.'s and who analyzed aspects of nonverbal behavior for their research studies are Levon Balzer, Tom Evans, Jack Matthews, Joe Abruscato, Herb Heger, and Russ French. Their research work on both teacher and student nonverbal behavior is of profound importance to the field.

It is to the exciting possibilities of knowing more about nonverbal influence and effects that interest turns now. Not only must the inward meanings of human experience be better understood but the outward forms of communicating those meanings as well. It is the relationships and disconnections between the two that is the difficult puzzle to solve. There is much to be learned.

January, 1970

Charles M. Galloway

NONVERBAL LANGUAGE

Communication is the problem. Ask the man on the street. Ask the businessman. Ask anyone who has ever been misunderstood and the reply remains the same: the problem is communication. Communication is difficult, it is complex. But more perplexing, the requirements of communicating well are not understood. A fascinating paradox, indeed, because it is believed that all would be well if persons would only communicate effectively.

Poor communication results from a failure in not being understood and in not understanding the responses of others. It is not providing clarity in messages to others. It is not understanding the meaning of messages to us. Either situation can result in poor communication. To be better understood and to better understand remains a continuous task for all who wish to communicate well.

While it is widely recognized that difficulties occur in communication, children suffer a grave handicap. Mature adults can handle deviations and distortions of message sending and receiving, but children are helpless in the face of unclear and complex messages. Young children are not sophisticated performers of expressive behavior. The adults of our culture are far more practiced at managing their behavioral cues to achieve a desired effect. That is why the behaviors of young children appear so unaffected and natural.

In school, the teacher's communication makes the difference. Quite obviously, the pupil is in a position to be the most seriously victimized by difficulties in communication, for the educative process is highly verbalized, with premium placed on spoken words. We need to understand that communication does consist of the transmission of words, but the meanings are in people. In the classroom, meanings are understood in terms of everything a teacher is, which implies that communication is a juncture of all behaviors, verbal and nonverbal.

Considering that communication appears in the form of verbal and nonverbal messages, that the words adults use to communicate to children can be misunderstood, that adults can misunderstand the responses of children, and that adults can convey unintentional feelings and attitudes only begins to suggest the apparent difficulties.

Analyses of interaction in the classroom have highlighted the importance of teacher influence on pupil behavior, learning, and attitude by associating influence with the teacher's verbal behavior.

Much effort has centered on the amount, kind, and direction of verbal communication. More significant is the notion that all behaviors have the possibility of communicating information to students. The statements of recognized experts and researchers which follow testify to the significance of behavior.

Gibb (9:124-25) writes: "... the problem of poor communication is simply a symptom of all the other basic problems that people have in relating to one another. A person's motivations and perceptions are the basic stuff out of which his interpersonal behavior is made. The manifestations of his perceptions and his motivations occur in verbal and nonverbal communication with other individuals. ... How the person communicates, his tone of voice, his facial expression, his choice of words, the amount and kind of his talk will all determine, in part, how the perceiver perceives his communication."

Halpin (12:103) states that training programs for school leaders "ignore the entire range of nonverbal communication, the muted language in which human beings speak to one another more eloquently than words.... To avoid the narrow view we must start by recognizing that man communicates to his fellow man with his entire body and with all his behavior."

Smith (17:98) gives an account of the function of expressive behavior in teaching: "These behaviors are illustrated in bodily posture, facial expression, tone of voice, expressions of the eyes, and other ways ... expressive behaviors function in teaching because they are taken by pupils as signs of the psychological state of the teacher."

Jourard (13:47) notes that a person will try continuously to read the motives of another person. He lists the most common bases employed for inferring the intentions and feelings of others: "... (a) observations of his facial expressions, tone of voice, and gestures, which generally disclose what the person is feeling; and (b) observations of the instrumental action and its consequence; from the actions, as to the need-tensions of the behavior—his aims, intentions, wishes, etc."

Blumer (1:517) states: "Nonsymbolic interaction is constituted ... by expressive behavior; i.e., a release of feeling and tension, to be distinguished as different from indication of intellectual intention, which properly comes on the symbolic level."

Regarding the various kinds of symbolic equipment, Goffman (10:23-24) states: "...one may take the term 'personal front' to refer to the items of expressive equipment.... As a part of personal front we may include: insignia of office or rank; clothing; sex, age, and racial characteristics; size and looks; posture; speech patterns;

facial expressions; bodily gestures; and the like. Some of these vehicles for conveying signs, such as racial characteristics, are relatively fixed... some of these sign vehicles are relatively mobile or transitory... and can vary during a performance."

One of the implied results of the Davidson and Lang (2:114) study was that teachers communicate different feelings toward children: "Teachers seem to vary in their inclination and/or their capacity to communicate favorable feelings. It seems urgent that teachers be helped to recognize the significance of the feelings which they express toward children, consciously or unconsciously."

Much information in the classroom is in the form of behavioral actions, and the meaning of behaviors in communication influences the teaching-learning process. During interaction, whether teacher-pupil or pupil-pupil, all signs, actions, and events have communicative consequences because such messages provide information. Pupils are constantly on the alert to discover relevant data that serve the functions of decreasing confusion and increasing understanding.

THE CLASSROOM

Nonverbal language means communicating without words. Its very definition implies that behaviors are as significant as words. Perhaps more significant. It stresses the "how" of communication rather than the "what." It highlights the functions of attitudes and feelings and makes them an important part of the language. The unintended and unwitting signs and signals we express toward others are also included.

Although facial expressions, postures, gestures, motor activities, dress, and other personal equipment are recognized widely as nonverbal indicators, the definition and implications of nonverbal language are greater than these. For example, something that you don't do can be as significant as something you do. If you ordinarily would expect a person to smile or to laugh after you have told a joke, and he doesn't, then you have unexpected information. It may have been a poor joke. You may have told it badly. Or you may have a lead toward understanding his values or perhaps his cultural background. It becomes a bit of datum you file away with other data, and it makes a difference in subsequent encounters with the person.

Nonverbal Influences

Nonverbal language is transmitted on silent terms. It is the unspoken culture understood by all its inhabitants and is learned by the give-and-take of human relationships. It reflects the implicit values of a culture, and it expresses attitudes and feelings which may not be obtained by any other means.

Among cultures there are countless ways to express greetings and to engage in behavioral communication with friends and relatives. For the Italian, for example, the behavior is the thing. It means what it represents, it is out in the open. To be Italian is to possess a nonverbal language unique to the Italian culture; a similar view can be stated for natural residents of Jewish, Spanish, French, Indian, and many other groups. Being born and reared in a stabilized culture brings with it the accumulation of a nonverbal language peculiar to its origin and development. A nonverbal language that has been stabilized over many generations conveys a fidelity for communicating effectively that is unsurpassed by words. Expressive behavior can be more eloquent than words.

Because nonverbal languages are influenced by socioeconomic and literacy levels, various language styles can be learned. Given

this variation, confusion and misunderstandings can occur even among residents of the same general culture. For example, it may be more difficult for a person of aristocratic origins in England to understand the behavioral language of a member of the cockney culture than that of a member of the German aristocracy.

Because of the diversity of his language influences, the American suffers severe misunderstandings in communication. There are tremendous language differences in Americans' behavioral messages. To travel or to contact persons of different subcultures in our society is to encounter different nonverbal languages. There is a tendency to provide inappropriate cues or to misread the meaning of behavioral language because we underestimate the differences.

Listening styles among children in school also may vary considerably. Children from suburban areas maintain eye contact while the teacher is talking. Indian children from various cultural tribes in the Southwest lower their heads and eyes as a sign of deference and respect when an adult encounters them face to face. It is a behavior that is valued by the culture. What a mistake it would be if the teacher were to insist that an Indian child maintain eye contact while the teacher talks. It has been observed repeatedly that students who attend inner-city schools are paying attention when their behavior often suggests otherwise. If a teacher has little experience and knowledge of the behavioral language of his students, it is natural for the teacher to impose and to project his own language on the students.

Entering the subcultural environment of the school, if you are a child who comes from a different cultural background, is to be at once confronted with a nonverbal language that is foreign. Not only must new verbal skills be mastered but also new nonverbal skills.

In the face of such barriers to understanding, students withdraw from classroom activity and school life. They view learning as difficult and they become alienated from the school.

Nonverbal languages arise from cultural influences that have been learned through experience. Similar behaviors can mean different things. A pat on the back may imply friendliness and support to one child and aggression and threat to another child. To some students, proximity to the teacher can stifle and embarrass, while other students may prefer close contacts. Cultural expressions among racial, ethnic, and social classes can differ markedly.

Nonverbal Cues and Responses

Attending school requires the young to learn a nonverbal language of the classroom. Students rarely are taught to raise their hands to get the teacher's attention, pay attention, appear busy at

their seats, or line up in halls. They are simply expected to comply —to possess the behaviors which communicate nonverbally to teachers that they know how to be students.

While much of student behavior is spontaneous and unrehearsed, children soon learn the skills it takes. And the longer they go to school the better their skills develop. It may be a sad commentary on life that people play games or that students need to learn behavioral skills to fulfill the requirements of schooling, but the name of the game is nonverbal language. Teachers expect behaviors, look for them, and reward their appearance.

Nonverbal information is exchanged in many obvious situations by teachers and students in the classroom every day.

"All right everybody, let's sit up in our seats and pay attention. I'm only going to say this one more time. Are we listening?"

Teachers rely heavily on this question to obtain behavioral attention from students. Such a question represents a direct command that students understand well.

When it is time for some activity to end, the teacher prepares and primes students for the act of dismissal. It occurs in the form of a question: "Are we ready to go?"

The nature of the question requires a behavioral response from students. Immediately, students sit erect in their chairs in a posture of attention and readiness. Some students clasp their hands in a prayerful gesture on their desks as further evidence. Students can use many behaviors to persuade the teacher that dismissal will be orderly. They learn that such responses work to convince the teacher of their good intentions.

At this point, many teachers visually survey the room for offenders who have not readily complied. To obtain more conforming responses from students, a second question is usually asked: "Are we really ready to go?" After this, students ordinarily contort themselves into rigid figures of readiness. This behavior is to suggest that they can indeed be trusted to exit with dispatch and order. The teacher says, "Okay, row one, row two...," etc.

But the students know very well that they are not going immediately to their destination, for they begin to line up in the hall. It is another ritual, another demand, and it requires another performance. Indeed, it involves an honor code students obey faithfully. Students through the door first are first in line. Any attempt to edge in front is met with a quick reprisal and a reminder that the line forms to the rear.

When the teacher appears suddenly at the head of the line, students are reminded once again of their proper behavior. The teacher provides the cue by a visual glance. This silent look asks them whether their line is straight. Because students in the front of the line are nearest to the teacher, they comply quickly. But not the students at the end of the line. To take care of this failure, the teacher looks to the rear, points at the offenders, walks toward them, or stands in silence with arms crossed until inappropriate behaviors subside. Students are now ready to go in a straight, continuous line to their destination.

Although these examples are overstated for many teachers, there is no intent to demean or criticize. Nor is there an intent to endorse these actions as an exemplary nonverbal language. The point is simple: a nonverbal language exists in the school.

The question is, what kind of nonverbal language should we teach? What expectations should we have? The answers will surely dictate the nonverbal language learned as a part of school life.

During classroom instruction, nonverbal information is transmitted in many ways. In the process of explaining something difficult to a group of students, teachers often easily convey unintential information. Throughout the explanation, it may be implied that everyone should understand, that everyone should follow the sheer simplicity of an explained step-by-step process the first time. The teacher seems to be saying that you must not be very bright if you don't.

After the explanation, the teacher usually turns to the class and asks, "Are there any questions?" This request for questions is honestly intended to provide students an opportunity to clarify their understanding or to prevent misunderstanding.

For a student to raise a question at this moment, in view of the teacher's implied communication, would be to say to his peers and to the teacher that he is indeed everything the teacher promised—a dimwit. Students ordinarily do not choose to make such announcements to anyone, much less to the teacher. They remain quiet, and the room remains silent. It is assumed that everyone understands the process as well as it was explained. If these conditions are established, it is difficult to determine who actually needs help and assistance. The words of openness by the teacher may be inviting, but his nonverbal language closes the doors of communication.

Nonverbal Observations

Nonverbal observations reveal unspoken thoughts and attitudes that it is quite unlikely students would choose to state in verbal forms. Certainly not in a direct fashion.

Students expect to be observed by teachers and behave in predictable ways. With a full awareness that the teacher is looking in their direction, a studious attitude can be projected. Students can appear attentive, interested, or in whatever way is necessary to convince the teacher they have the proper attitude. A teacher can be alert to these staged pretenses and can learn to see beyond what would not be obvious to the uninitiated and to witness a parade of moods, attitudes, and feelings.

A sensitive elementary teacher shared the observations which follow.[1] They indicate the almost inexhaustible list that could be identified and recorded. Many of these student behaviors were spontaneous and reflected obvious attitudes, while some of the others were modeled by students for the benefit of teacher observation.

> When I was waiting for a group of children to quiet down, one child who was looking at me punched another child who was talking. That child turned to look at me and immediately gave me his attention.
>
> During sharing, Mary Beth sits with her hands folded and periodically glances at me and then looks at the child who is sharing. This is her way of showing me she is listening and she wants me to see that she is.
>
> While being given a standard test, Tammy would try to glance at her neighbor's paper. If she saw me looking at her, she would glance to the ceiling as if she were just thinking on her own.
>
> When talking about hearing, a picture of a small girl holding a telephone receiver was shown. When the question, "What's the little girl doing?" was asked, the children not only responded verbally but pretended to be holding a telephone receiver.
>
> When desiring to answer a question, children raise their hand high and wiggle all over while inhaling loud gasps of air. If that doesn't work, they get up on one knee and before long they are beginning to stand. Finally, they begin to jump up and down.
>
> Tom answered a question that Susie wanted to answer. She sighed and hit him lightly on the back, telling him she wanted that chance.

---

[1]Observations were made by Ann Femia, a former teacher of Columbus (Ohio) Public Schools.

The children are very quiet going to the gym, but once inside the gym door they break loose; girls scream and boys run and slide on their knees on the floor.

When playing the game, "Opposite Corners," the children begin to scream when they begin to converge and stop screaming after they pass each other. This always occurs with the girls.

When Billy is being disciplined at play time, he doesn't look at the teacher, but keeps wiggling and glancing back to the area from which he came.

Throughout a teaching day, there are many occurrences that can be properly classified as nonverbal events. Their impact on the course and direction of classroom activity shapes the contextual meaning derived from a situation and often plays a more significant role in student learning than the formal teaching that takes place. These events not only minimize verbal messages but they also become the very focus of attention, the idea that lingers long after the event has passed. Why this should be so is most difficult to answer, but the character and influence of these events speak for themselves.

Space. Classrooms are usually divided into territories where a teacher and students occupy given areas of traditional space. Arrangements are static, with the teacher's desk at the front of the room and students seated in rows. More imaginative, fluid arrangements of desks and furniture influence the potential meaning of a learning context.

Travel. Where and when a teacher chooses to travel in a classroom signifies meaning. In the past, teachers moved around their desks as if they were isles of security. They rarely ventured into the territories of student residence unless they wished to check or monitor seatwork. To move forward or away from students signifies relationships. Distance establishes the status of interaction.

After making many classroom observations and after viewing many video tapes, one observer[2] has concluded that the further the teacher is from the student the less aware of the student's behavior he is. The physical barriers of several desks and human bodies between teacher and student make awareness difficult. Distance is the greatest barrier. As a case in point, he noted that one teacher teaching the entire class failed to note (as revealed on video tape) that a child at the back of the room slid down in his seat, went under his desk, came up in front of the desk, and calmly walked around it to take his seat again.

[2]Bill Hill of the Xenia, Ohio, Experimental Center for Elementary Education.

Time. How teachers use their time indicates the value and importance they place on something. Spending little time on a topic or passing by it can indicate no interest in or knowledge about the topic, and students can frequently relate what a teacher's preferences are and what the teacher dislikes. Teachers do not ordinarily recognize the meanings of their use of time.

It has been discovered in viewing video tapes that some students deceive the teacher in their use of time. A prime example of this was seen with a third-grade girl who was a nonreader. For twenty minutes she went through the motions of being busy (during study time). She sharpened her pencil, went to the wastepaper basket, took books out of her desk, moved her tablet around on the surface of the desk, looked at a book, etc., but did no work. Until she saw the video tape, the teacher believed the girl was "trying very hard" and "using her time profitably."

Control. Teachers engage in various nonverbal tactics to control the behavior of students. These silent expressions serve as singular events to remind students of teacher expectations. A few examples capture the essence of these nonverbal maneuvers: indicates inability to hear due to classroom noise; places finger to lips; stands with hands on hips and stares in silence; scans room to see who is not working; records in grade book while student reports; raises brow or uses eyes to gain attention.

Classroom Life

The effects of nonverbal influences in classroom life are beginning to receive widespread attention. Until now, these effects and influences have seldom been recognized in specific ways. Improving the act of teaching in a classroom implies the need to study nonverbal cues and events, for many classroom phenomena serve as communicators of information. As the teacher works to establish better classroom learning, it is important to realize that nonverbal meanings make lasting impressions. Especially is this true when a contradiction exists between words and actions. The behaviors and events of classroom activity have verbal and nonverbal elements. When an incongruity occurs, it is the nonverbal effects that are accepted as valid. Nonverbal communication does make a difference in student learnings in classrooms.

IMPROVING NONVERBAL LANGUAGE

When a teacher concerns himself with nonverbal language, he takes an attitude toward the importance of what people do. The requirements of taking nonverbal cues seriously implies a willingness to be open and to act more intelligently in any interpersonal situation. Above all, it frees the person to understand more meaningfully and to accept more openly the difficulties of what it means to be human in any cultural setting. By having more information about their nonverbal patterns rather than less, the teacher is free to behave in his own best interests and to enable students to do likewise.

When teachers have had an opportunity to study their own nonverbal patterns, their first response is amazement—that their own behavior can make such a difference. They are struck by the lasting influence it has on student understanding and perception. Analyzing the human processes of nonverbal languages is an exciting and enlarging experience. It results in a better understanding of oneself and others and becomes an endless quest.

In regarding the potential influence and consequence of a teacher's nonverbal behavior with pupils, it is useful to view a teacher's behavior on a continuum which ranges from encouraging to restricting communication. This conceptualization reflects a process point of view: an action system of behaviors that exist in dynamic relationship to the continuing influence of the teacher and pupil in interaction with each other. It utilizes these categories.

Encouraging Communication

1. Enthusiastic Support. Enthusiastic approval, unusual warmth, emotional support, or strong encouragement. A smile or nod to show enjoyment, pleasure, or satisfaction. A pat on the back, a warm greeting of praise, or any act that shows obvious approval. Vocal intonation or inflection of approval and support.

2. Helping. A spontaneous reaction to meet a pupil's request, help a pupil, or answer a need. A nurturant act. A look of acceptance and understanding of a problem, implying "I understand," or "I know what you mean," and followed up by appropriate action. An action intended to help. A tender, compassionate, or supportive voice. Or a laugh, a vocalization that breaks the tension.

3. Receptivity. Willingness to listen with patience and interest to pupil talk. By paying attention to the pupil, the teacher shows

interest, implying that "lines of communication are open." He maintains eye contact, indicates patience and attention, suggests a readiness to listen or an attempt at trying to understand. A pose or stance of alertness, readiness, or willingness to have pupils talk. A gesture that indicates the pupil is on the "right track." A gesture that openly or subtly encourages the pupil to continue. The teacher augments pupil talk or encourages the pupil to continue: "Yes, yes" (um-hm), "Go on," "Okay," "All right," or "I'm listening." Such a vocalization supplements and encourages the pupil to continue.

4. Pro Forma. A matter of form or for the sake of form. Whether a facial expression, action, or vocal language, it neither encourages nor inhibits communication. A routine act in which the teacher does not need to listen or to respond.

Inhibiting Communication

5. Inattentive. Unwillingness or inability to be attentive. Disinterest or impatience with pupil talk. Avoidance of eye contact. Apparent disinterest, impatience, unwillingness to listen. Slouchy or unalert posture. "Don't care attitude," the ignoring of pupil talk. Stance indicating internal tension, preoccupation, or concern with own thoughts. A hand gesture to block or terminate pupil talk. Impatience, or "I want you to stop talking."

6. Unresponsive. Failure to respond when a response would ordinarily be expected. Egocentric behavior, openly ignoring need, insensitive to feeling. An obvious denial of pupil feelings, noncompliance. Threatens, cajoles, condescends. Withdrawing from a request or expressed need of a pupil. Disaffection or unacceptance of feeling. A gesture suggesting tension or nervousness. Obvious interruption and interference.

7. Disapproval. Strong disapproval, negative overtones, disparagement, or strong dissatisfaction. Frowning, scowling, threatening glances. Derisive, sarcastic, or disdainful expression that "sneers at" or condemns. Physical attack or aggressiveness—a blow, slap, or pinch. A pointed finger that pokes fun, belittles, or threatens pupils. Vocal tone that is hostile, cross, irritated, or antagonistic. Utterance suggesting unacceptance, disappointment, depreciation, or discouragement.

The need to describe and analyze the effects of teachers' nonverbal messages and pupil response is of paramount concern. Such an analysis demands a useful observational approach that provides data relevant to what a teacher does.

Using the seven categories of the continuum, observers make inferences concerning the influence and instrumental effect of teacher

behavior. They simply note the occurrence of a nonverbal message by writing the numbers of the category for that communicative action. These numbers are recorded in a vertical column.

Recording in categories involves a sensitivity to nuances, inflections, and subtle cues. Three kinds of nonverbal behaviors are particularly noted: facial expressions, gestures, and body movements, and vocal intonations and inflections. As the influence and direction of nonverbal messages conveyed by the teacher change, differences appear in recorded categories. No arbitrary time limit, such as every three seconds or ten seconds, is set for categorizing. Observers rely on the natural unfolding of events.

Recording in categories is a difficult undertaking, for confounding factors enter into the process. The influence of verbal communication, relative positions of the observers, and the differing interpretations of teacher nonverbal behavior by observers make it difficult to obtain complete information.

The approach of tallying in categories appears to be most fruitful when analyzing teacher and pupil behavior on video tapes, for the tapes can be viewed several times. Viewing a video tape gives a teacher an opportunity to hear and see the words and actions of classroom activity. Most teachers are surprised at how they look and sound. The students seem natural, but the teacher is shocked at his own image. He wants to ask, "Is that really me? Do I talk like that? Do I look like that?"

Teachers soon get over the cosmetic shock of their own image and behavior. Seeing the classroom through the camera's eye enables the viewer to see behaviors missed in the give-and-take of teaching. Teachers become aware of raised hands that were missed, student-to-student exchanges at a nonverbal level, and other behaviors.

Teaching is a highly personal matter. Teachers need to face themselves as well as to acquire pedagogical skills. Nonverbal communication in the classroom is difficult to study. But it has significance for teaching and learning.

COMBINING VERBAL AND NONVERBAL

A number of observational systems for examining teacher verbal behaviors have been developed in recent years. The Flanders system of Interaction Analysis has enjoyed perhaps the widest acceptance and utilization. The categories of the Flanders system in their briefest form can be identified as follows: (1) accepts student feeling; (2) praises or encourages; (3) uses student idea; (4) asks questions; (5) lectures; (6) gives direction; (7) criticizes or justifies authority; (8) student response; (9) student-initiated talk; (10) silence or confusion.

Many teachers apparently accept student feelings, offer praise or encouragement, or criticize students by means of either simple or elaborate patterns of nonverbal cues. Face-to-face verbal communications are always accompanied by nonverbal cues. By the fact of physical presence, this situation cannot be avoided. Expressions of behavioral style during human contacts make a difference and can be understood. Whether teacher influence is direct or indirect, it is the unique combination of verbal and nonverbal information that influences meaning.

Category 1 (accepts student feeling) requires both verbal and nonverbal behaviors. These behaviors are closely related, but the meaning of the words depends on how they are said. The verbal statement, "I know how you feel," can sound empty. Indeed, the verbal characteristics are more hazardous to defend than the nonverbal qualities. Nonverbal nods and glances can be quite accepting, while verbal responses clarify feelings. It is not difficult to determine whether the teacher does or does not accept student feeling, but an observer needs more than verbal information. Accepting student feeling is jointly verbal and nonverbal.

Category 2 (praises or encourages) implies a nonverbal dimension of congruency or incongruency. Congruency occurs when teacher nonverbal cues and verbal messages are consistent. The fidelity of teacher praise is clear and believable. Nonverbal cues reinforce the verbal message so that it is unambiguous. When a discrepancy or contradiction appears between verbal and nonverbal cues, there is an incongruity. Praise and encouragement are demanding behaviors for teachers, and incongruities occur most frequently when praise is given perfunctorily. Sarcasm and insincerity are other forms of incongruity.

The nonverbal consequences of Category 3 (uses student idea) involve two primary ways in which teachers respond to students.

Teachers may merely recognize or acknowledge student expression by automatically repeating or restating it. Teacher use of student ideas in this way is perfunctory. Conversely, a teacher may respond by using a student's idea in subsequent discussion, he may react to an idea by reflecting on it, or he may turn the idea to the class as worthy of discussion. Teacher response of this kind can be distinguished from mechanical acknowledgment of student ideas and can be understood as truly using or implementing ideas. While nonverbal cues are always present, they are less apparent in a mechanical response. Routine recognition of a student idea undoubtedly provides steady reinforcement, but the active involvement and partial reinforcement provided by implementing student ideas in discussion is important to fostering open communication and classroom learning.

Category 4 (asks questions) can be personal or impersonal. Personalizing questions requires a sense of nearness and proximity; the teacher has a personal involvement in meaningful exchange. Impersonal question-asking conveys detachment, aloofness, and a sense of distance.

In lecturing or giving information (Category 5), a teacher can be responsive or unresponsive to student behavior. The key factor is teacher sensitivity to his own behavior while talking to students. If pupils indicate they are restive, bored, disinterested, or inattentive, the teacher needs to change the pace or direction of his own talk. Or perhaps to stop talking. Teacher talk that continues in the face of unreceptive student behavior is unresponsive to behavioral feedback.

Category 6 (gives direction) is viewed as behaviors that involve or dismiss students. Teacher directions can involve students in a clarification of expectations, or they can be used to control student behavior. Facilitating directions convey the idea that learning is a joint venture in which both pupils and teacher have a mutual purpose. Dismissing directions are punitive; the notion is communicated that the teacher would rather control than clarify.

The dimension of firm or harsh helps to qualify Category 7 (criticizes or justifies authority). Firm criticisms can evaluate a situation cleanly and crisply and clarify expectations. They lack the hostility, severity, and indignity of harsh criticisms and are devoid of the aggressive or defensive behaviors criticisms can sometimes yield. Differentiating between firm or harsh criticisms and authoritarian justifications clarifies an important difference in classroom life.

Flanders separates student talk into two categories—response to teacher (Category 8) and student-initiated talk (Category 9). One nonverbal dimension is appropriate to both categories, for teacher

behavior during student talk can be receptive or inattentive. Receptive teacher behaviors reflect attitudes of listening and interest, facial involvement, and eye contact and suppression of teacher distraction and egoism. Inattentive teacher behaviors generally involve a lack of eye contact and extraneous teacher travel or movement.

Category 10 (silence or confusion) possesses little inherent value in the Flanders system. Yet, there are different kinds of silence and confusion. The dimension of comfort or distress is useful for recording a distinction. Comfortable silences are characterized by times of reflection, thought, or work. Distressing moments are produced by embarrassment or are tension-filled times. Comfortable periods of confusion are those in which students are stimulated or exhibit excitement, while distressing instances reflect disorganization and disorientation. Nonverbal cues set the stage for either comfortable or distressful classroom occurrences.

The observation system for combining the verbal and nonverbal is presented in a simpler form below:

Indirect-Direct (Verbal)	Encouraging-Restricting (Nonverbal)
Accepts student feeling	
Praises or encourages	Congruent-Incongruent
Uses student idea	Implementing-Perfunctory
Asks questions	Personal-Impersonal
Lectures--gives information	Responsive-Unresponsive
Gives direction	Involving-Dismissing
Criticizes or justifies authority	Firm-Harsh
Student talk (response)	Receptive-Inattentive
Student talk (initiated)	Receptive-Inattentive
Silence or confusion	Comforting-Distressing

Given an understanding of the rationale and background of this system, an observer can record in verbal and nonverbal categories. This system is designed to enable an observer to use the categories, time intervals, and ground rules of the original Flanders system while recording the nonverbal dimensions as well. By marking a slash (encouraging) or dash (restricting) to the right of recorded tallies, an observer can record both the verbal and nonverbal dimensions. A circled number is used to enclose the tally when teacher behavior is solely nonverbal.

A significant amount of data suggests that Interaction Analysis can be learned easily and used with reliability. Because of this and because the Flanders system focuses primarily upon verbal behavior, adding nonverbal dimensions has been successful. Combining verbal categories with relevant nonverbal dimensions affords a unique approach to a complete analysis of interaction in the classroom.

For teachers and supervisors untrained in the use of formal observational systems, other means exist to obtain information and feedback. Another approach for describing classroom activity has been the procedure of narrative description. Several educators find this approach to be more natural and more descriptive of actual events.

For this observational procedure, communicative events are recognized as episodes. During the process of writing, observers divide communicative events into episodes by beginning new paragraphs. Considerable reconstruction of notes is often undertaken after observations, since complete descriptions cannot be written while observing. A favorite means has been for an observer to use his notes and talk into a tape recorder. This procedure has been used quite successfully by observers who take the role of participant-observer.

In writing narrative descriptions, the ground rules listed below are applicable to the observer. They are listed specifically because of their relevance to observer training, accuracy of the records, and significant relationship to reliable and consistent results.

1. Describe the total situation that directly confronts the observer.
2. Focus upon the behavior of the teacher.
3. Describe everything done by any pupil that communicates with the teacher.
4. Describe communicative acts as fully as possible.
5. Put inferences in parentheses, not in descriptions.
6. Write descriptions in simple sentences.

Each observation record includes a narrative description of the obvious or apparent overt behavioral actions and nonverbal messages occurring in the situation. Simple language is largely employed, much like the example below.

> The teacher stands at the front of the room while students work at their desks. The room is very quiet. The teacher moves over to a table and begins to look through a magazine.
>
> A boy walks over and asks something. The teacher looks at him, frowning, and says, "Shhh." The boy looks somewhat disappointed but goes back to his seat without saying anything else.
>
> The teacher marks a place in a magazine, looks around the room, picks up another magazine, and continues looking through it. A boy walks up with his paper in his hand. As he shows it, he asks something. The teacher frowns at him, saying, "This is to see how well you follow directions.

(Teacher hands paper back.) Go straight to your desk and start over. This time do some thinking." Teacher's manner is reproachful.

The boy takes the paper, sighs, and turns to go. When he returns to his desk he tears up his paper, gets out another sheet, and begins to work again.

The teacher looks at the class, saying, "Those who go to the library be back by eleven o'clock." Several students get up, walk to the board, write their names, and leave the room.

Two boys start out the door together. The teacher starts across the room, calling, "Where do you two think you are going?" One boy replies that he is going to look up some more about people. The other says that he is going along to loan his friend some paper.

The teacher frowns and, shaking her forefinger, continues, "You know better than that. Don't go to the library unless you have your own equipment to work with." The boys look down at the floor as the teacher talks to them. They go back to their seats.

The teacher walks over to the student teacher and asks her to go to the library. She picks up her books and leaves. The teacher walks around the room, looking at students' work.

The teacher stops at a boy's desk, picks up his paper. The boy stands up beside the teacher. The teacher says, "You're looking at it all wrong." The boy sighs, slams himself into his chair, grabs a pencil, and goes back to work. The teacher appears unconcerned and pays no attention to this act.

The teacher continues to observe the class working, then returns to the table and flips through some other magazines. The teacher walks over to a girl, stands behind her desk, watches her work, leans forward, and says something. The girl does not look up as the teacher talks.

There is a moment of silence, then the teacher takes the girl by the chin, saying in a harsh voice, "Look at me. (Girl looks up.) You are not going to make a mistake!" (The girl looks away.)

The teacher stands and glares at her. The teacher speaks again: "If you're sick I'll send you home; otherwise, I expect you to get to work."

At this time two boys from another class come in the room. They ask, "May we borrow your stapler?" Teacher says, "I'd love to let you borrow it but we're using it." Boys say, "Thanks," and leave the room.

The teacher turns back to the same girl and stares at her for what seems like several minutes. Finally, the girl stands up and walks to the board. As she starts to write

her name, the teacher calls across the room, "Write it so I can read your name." The girl erases her name and slowly writes it again. She does not look at the teacher.

The girl starts back toward her desk, either looking at the floor or away so that she won't have to meet the gaze of the teacher's eyes. As the girl approaches her desk, the teacher walks over, grabs her by the shoulders, saying, "Don't you know how to act?" The girl looks up briefly with a downcast expression and manages to pull her shoulders out of the teacher's grasp. The girl doesn't say a word.

The girl returns to her desk, picks up her books, and walks around the far side of the room. She goes out the door, apparently to the library. (The girl's course around the far side of the room is clearly to evade the teacher's contact.)

At the table, the teacher flips through magazines again. A boy walks up and asks a question about his work. The teacher responds with, "Haven't you finished yet, Joe?" With despair, Joe looks down at the floor and returns to his desk.

The teacher returns to flipping the magazine pages as the remaining students work silently at their desks.

This observation record is accurate and these communicative events occurred as described. When the teacher read this record, she was shocked at its varied meanings. Especially surprising was the severity of her contacts with students and her seeming indifference. Of profound importance to the teacher were the implications of unintended influence. She noted that her behaviors seemed more inhibiting than she remembered. Upon closer reflection she did testify that the episodes were accurate and impartial. She also insisted that the record had a kind of objectivity she was unable to analyze in her own behavior. Observational records of this kind have helped teachers like the teacher in the example to be more open to events in the classroom and to be more aware of their consequence.

INCREASING OPENNESS AND AWARENESS

Because we can hear ourselves when we talk, adjustments can be made in our verbal speech. Something uttered verbally that does not sound appropriate can be restated. In a word, we can correct our messages to others. Oral communication permits this marvelous facility for receiving instantaneous feedback in relationship to what is said. Our very words become data not only for others but for ourselves. Our verbal utterances act as a feedback loop to determine if our words meet our test of intent and meaning.

To alter nonverbal acts and behaviors is not so easy. Even when you begin to recognize them, change is difficult. Most teachers have been behaving in patterned ways for a long time, and immediate reversals of past habits and attitudes is improbable.

The best strategy is to develop an attitude of openness. This is necessary if an improvement of skills and attitudes is to be effected.

Assuming an open attitude toward self and others—the means for becoming better informed—involves awareness, understanding, and acceptance. To be aware is to observe more fully the nonverbal reactions of others and self. To understand implies the need to analyze the meaning of your observations and to suspend your judgments. To accept is to acknowledge that your behavior means what it does. This is especially difficult. Yet, once you can accept what your behavior represents, the door is open to behaving differently. You can come to terms with your own attitudes and feelings and you can begin to express your real self with fidelity.

To understand and to be better understood is a continuous task for all teachers. The following suggestions are not meant to be exhaustive but simply indicative of the importance of nonverbal cues:

- Try to be more aware of your tendency to overlook some students. Give them your support with positive glances. See more students as able and worthy of your interest and attention. Your visual glances reveal your attitudes and feelings.

- Make every effort to detect students who need help in their assigned work. They often request assistance nonverbally but hesitate to do so verbally. These requests can be quite subtle (a hidden embarrassment, a soulful look, a drooping head, an appearance of thinking, a busy and occupied manner, etc.), and observing them requires a sensitive outlook by the teacher.

● When a child asks a question or needs assistance, try to match his nonverbal behavior with equal concern. Do not respond too quickly. Adults make problems too easy to solve, and the student is put on the defensive. Take time and proceed slowly.

● Discuss nonverbal cues and expressions exchanged by people in their everyday lives. What do they convey? How do we react to them? Give students an opportunity to state their views of adult expressions.

● While you are listening to a student talk, be alert to your attentive behaviors. Let him know you really care and are interested in what he is saying. Respond so that he knows you understand.

● Be conscious of the behaviors you model for students so that you can become more alert to their response to you. Students accept your verbal language far more readily if your nonverbal behavior is consistent. Nonverbal language is the language of credibility.

● Make an effort to be aware of behavioral requirements and expectations you hold for students in school. Begin to realize that your view helps to create the nonverbal language the student understands for himself in school. He learns these behaviors because they represent the primary means for survival.

● Nonverbal acts can be preferable to words. Experiment with giving nonverbal responses instead of verbal reactions. Resist the temptation to talk. Notice how students will share more information and ideas. Many studies show that the teacher's voice is heard far too often.

● Read your feedback. This is not easy to do but it is especially helpful. If you feel misunderstood or fail to get your point across, your nonverbal behavior may have cancelled out the effectiveness of your words.

● Use gestures and body movements to support what you say. They are an excellent way of reinforcing what you are trying to convey. Your effectiveness in transmitting ideas is visual as well as auditory.

Data from our expression of nonverbal cues are not easily available. We cannot see ourselves when we behave. If we lived in a world of mirrors, perhaps nonverbal cues could be easily manipulated. But this is not the case—we have to rely on the reactions and responses of others. In the classroom, unless the teacher is willing to be observed or is willing to be filmed, attending to the behaviors of students is the major source of information.

The prospect of training teachers to become more knowledgeable of nonverbal cues is developing. For the present, a greater openness

to the occurrence of nonverbal events and expressions plus a greater awareness of student behavior are the major keys.

The ability to respond appropriately to the influence and effect of one's message-sending when communicating with others appears to be a learned ability. While teachers seem to differ markedly in their ability to be sensitive to nonverbal influences, they can learn to be more aware of the messages they communicate and the responses that follow. Teachers can learn to capitalize on the meaning of their own nonverbal communication.

In this exposure to nonverbal language, the importance of silent messages and subtle cues was introduced. The value of introspection and peer observation was emphasized. The significance of obtaining and using feedback from teacher behavior was stressed. Attending to actions, reactions, and interactions of students helps to provide a different kind of feedback. The more we attempt to understand the meaning of our messages, the greater our chances of communicating effectively. The real test of meaning lies in our ability and willingness to understand how we have been understood.

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